1: Tessmann--xiv E-5 (1904-1909) 1913 FH9 Fang FH9

131
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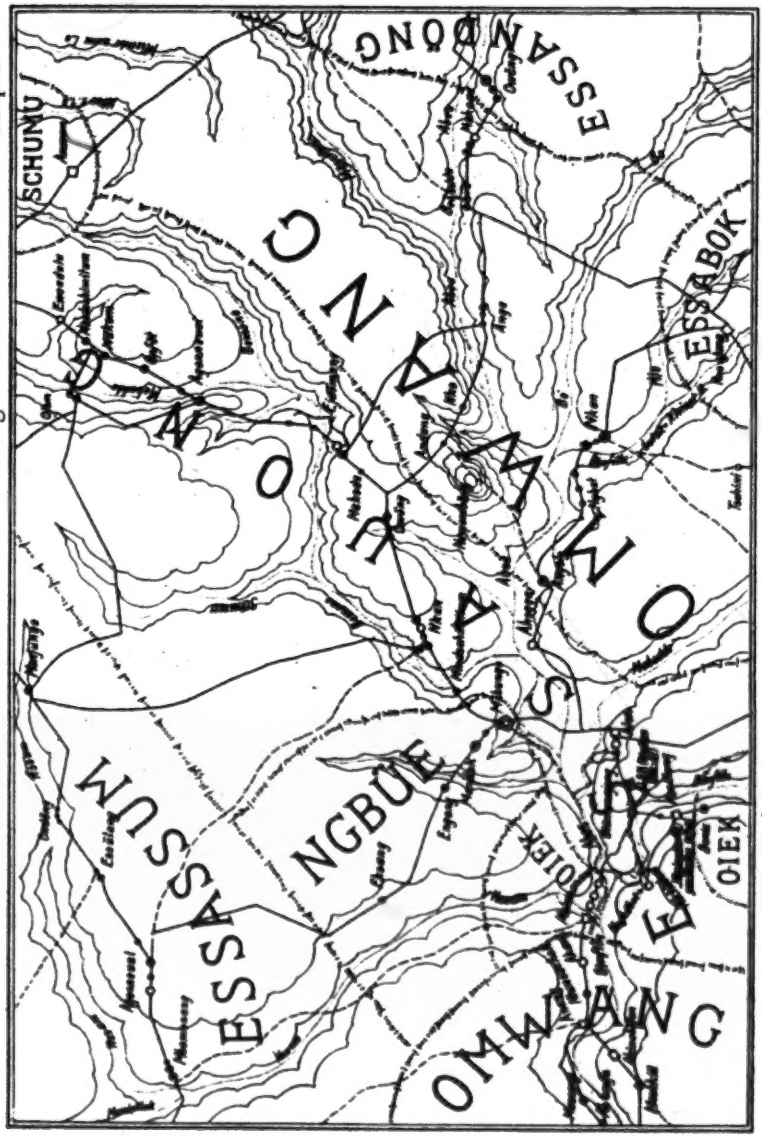
●619

Map 2

Families and Settlements in the Pangwe Area.



3: Trézenem

●619

Fang FH9

/Information on the social unit Trézenem calls the "tribe" has been placed in Category 614 Sibs. --Analyst/

162 was explored and then occupied only at a late date. These condi-
361 tions delayed "contaminations" and permitted the maintenance of a certain unity.' It now has a viable economic structure, thanks to its cacao production, which has finally created a true peasant state. [79]

1. Bitam and Minvoul Districts

These two districts are wedged between the Cameroons to the north, Spanish Guinea to the west, and a true "no man's land" to the east. The inhabitants, numbering 27,500, are the most active
[433 and prosperous elements(producing three quarters of the cacao
511] grown in the region) on the roads serving the Cameroons and the center of Oyem. They have built modernized villages "tied" to the cacao plantations. Their inhabitants belong to groupings found in the Cameroons and in Spanish Guinea, and some of the villagers have relatives in one or the other territory — like so many links favoring traffic in "merchandise" and ideas.

619 According to the census of 1936, the only detailed document,
615 27 clans or tribal fragments (clans that have maintained the tribal name) are now there. The most numerous clan is that of the Effak
[162] (Yénzbk tribe), (1) which has more than 15 percent of the population,

1. We give the tribal dependencies with all reservation. The near ignorance and "cheating" allied to the movement of clan regroupment render all certainty impossible, except when we have access to early documents, more particularly to a mention in the notes of Monsignor Martrou, which were kindly lent to us at the Libreville Mission.

followed by that of the Eba (Yémisèm tribe), which has 10 percent. The other groups may go down to a few tens of individuals. In this region are found the following tribes (ayog): Yénzbk, Yémvog, Yémisèm. These are the most important in the Cameroons in the

5: Balandier--10 E-5 (1946-1951)1955 FH9 Fang FH9

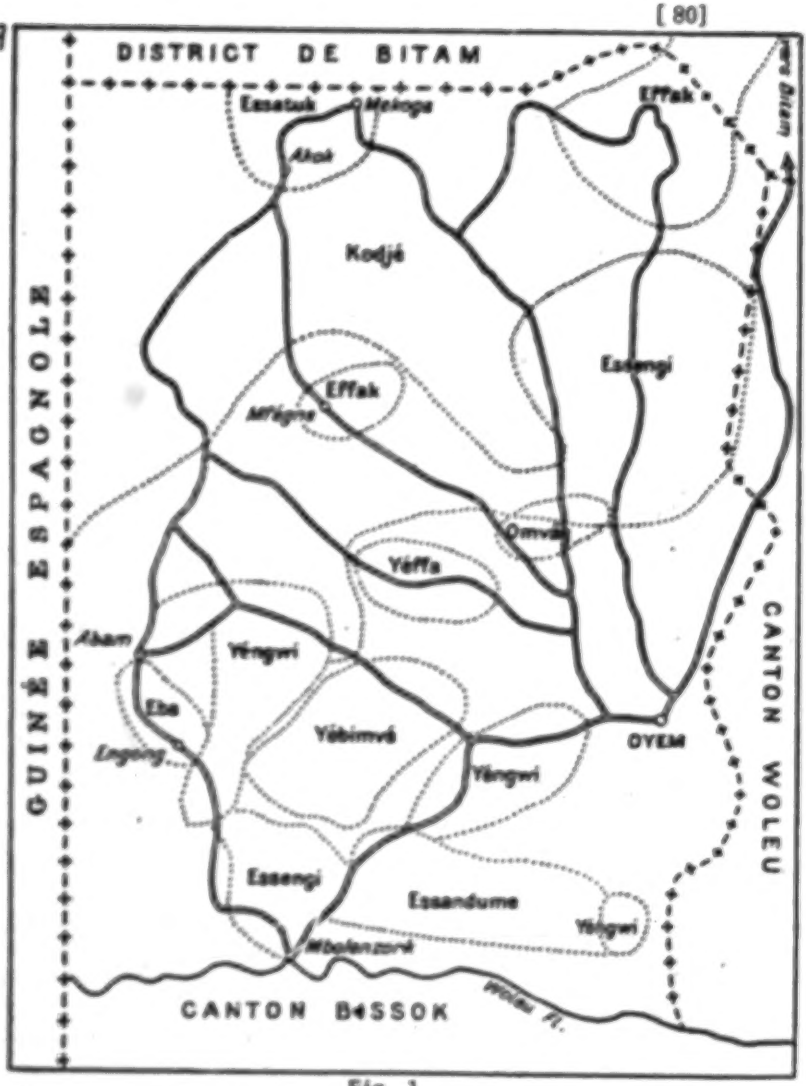


Fig. 1

Distribution of the "Aỳǒg" in Kyé-Nyé Canton (District of Oyem).

619 Ebolowa and Sangmélima regions (2). The whole of Upper Woleu-
615

2. Documents relating to "ethnic groupings," Administrative Archives of Ebolowa.

N'Tem is oriented toward the Cameroons with which it has not
[439] only economic ties (it exports its cacao there and imports its goods) but also political ties (which explains why it served to relay the directives and their implementations that appeared in this territory).

2. Oyem District

162 This district, with 30,000 inhabitants, has a long frontier with
361 Spanish Guinea, and is crossed by the Woleu River, an important
439 means of access to this possession. The major part of the population (more than two thirds) is "stuck" to the frontier. This is understood because related groups exist on each side of the frontier; [80] [Fig. 1] [81] Guinea has always exerted an economic attraction (it is the center of trade and exchange of labor which is much
[433 in demand), she serves occasionally as a place of refuge. The vil-
511] lagers are fairly well-to-do because of the cacao cultivation (one fourth of the Woleu-N'Tem production) and because of the trade with Guinea (peanuts, coffee, palmetto). This is shown particularly by an improvement in housing.

162 Kyé-Nyé Canton, a meeting place of two migratory streams
619 coming from the Lower Cameroons, contains by itself nearly
615 12,000 inhabitants who again are distributed by clans (Fig. 1). The dominant groupings are the Esengi (Yémvòg tribe), who account for more than 40 percent, the Kojé for about 25 percent, and the Yéngwi for over 15 percent. In the canton of Woleu, the villages of the Ozip tribe are dominant, accounting for 33 percent of the population. Then the Bökwé (Ndòg tribe) account for about 12 percent, and the Esamökos (Yéngól tribe) (1) for more than 10

1. Only confirmed by the notes of L. Martrou.

162 percent. Only the Koǰe (more than 90 percent of the population)
619 and the Oǰip form the Canton of Oyem. In Bissok Canton, the
615 population is dominated by the Yéngwi and Yémisɛm tribes, while Ellelem Canton is characterized by a sprinkling of groups: 17 clans or tribal fragments for 3,200 inhabitants, where the Bökwé (allied to the Ndôg tribe) alone assert themselves, although apparently numbering less than 25 percent.

361 Oyem District shows a great homogeneity, which is found
184 nowhere else in Fang country in Gabon. Its greater population density, its relative prosperity, the fact that it is centered on Oyem, an important administrative and market town, these facts explain the prestige it exerts on Fang villagers and its present-day political vitality.

3. Mitzic District

162 With 11,000 inhabitants belonging stricto sensu to the Fang
361 group (2) this district occupies a position which lends itself badly to

> 2. We designate as Fang the restricted whole which bears this sole name — a migratory group according to us.

the stabilization of a population. It opens on three zones of attraction: the Ogooué, the coast, and Spanish Guinea. It has played the role of thoroughfare and was profoundly disturbed during the famine years (1922-23, 1925-26). It is barely beginning to modernize its economy by the installation of cacao plantations. [82] Besides being the least populated district, it has the worst demographic situation, the lowest birth rate, and the smallest child population. Although the people have settled along the roads (as is clearly shown when present-day maps are compared to early ones), the villages have remained unstable and very small, consisting of
361 composite groupings. An investigation of 50 villages spread along
615 the two roads show that they have in their midst 30 clans or tribal
619 fragments. At the time of the recent regrouping of clans, the most

active tribes were the Yémvŏg, the Yémŏdâg, the Ndôg, the Yéngwi, and the Yémisèm. They are also the ones which reveal a tendency to dominate. If Mitzic could have been considered the "geographic center" of Fang country, it would be difficult now to find for it any other significance.

4. Médouneu District

Reduced to a single canton this cistrict has less than 3,500 inhabitants It is maintained because of its position on the frontier and because of the network of tracks used by traders which run directly to Lower Gabon and Libreville. The Oyék and the Effak are the most numerous groups, making up 13 out of the 37 villages scattered throughout the district.

We have applied ourselves with great precision to this whole region not only because our investigation was carried out chiefly in the Woleu-N'Tem villages, but because it plays a primary role in the development of Gabon. Its chief town, Oyem, competes with Libreville in imposing its directives on the whole Fang country. Its richer economy and better demography (the population density is more than 6.5 inhabitants per kilometer (1) make

1. Map of Captain Roussel (completed in 1912) and surveys of itineraries in the Oyem District

it a center of vitality. Closely allied to the Cameroons (from whom it receives suggestions of policy) and opening onto Spanish Guinea, it nevertheless preserves a sense of unity and a certain special spirit.

Region of the Ogooué-Ivindo

This region has neither the ethnic unity (it is a zone of multiple contacts) nor the demographic importance (35,600 inhabitants scattered throughout three districts) of the preceding one. It is isolated and without [83] economic development; its isolation has made it a zone of refuge in a period of uncertain peace.

162 Dominated by the great and often marshy forest, this country is
361 characterized by a very localized population indicated on a map by "strips" linked to the system of rivers. In the two districts which they occupy, Booué and Makokou, the Fang are the dominating ethnic group, forming about 45 percent and 40 percent of the total population. They are in the neighborhood of ethnic groups which are considered to be related to them, the Shaké and the
[177] Bakwélé. By their migrations they have disordered the population of this region and created contacts resulting in great cultural contaminations. If one can believe Father Trilles, who noted an "archaic language" used in the legends, proverbs, and songs, and similar to Batéké, (1) the relations with the peoples of the Congo

1. Father H. Trilles, op. cit

and Gabon borders would be early.

173 According to tradition, the Fang-Maké (or Bisibé) were the first to reach the Ivindo. De Brazza finds them on the Ogooué (on the island of Zabouré).
● 619 Their largest tribe is Mékuk, specifically referred to by Father Trilles and specially mentioned by Tessmann on his distribution map. Outside of the Maké, the Fang of this region are in two distinct groups — Bétsi and Nzaman — the latter representing, according to early authors, the "true Pahouin of the Ogooué." (2) In Booué District the villages, although without clan

2 Cf. Captain Curault, "Monographie du secteur de N'Djolé au Gabon [Monograph on the N'Djolé section of Gabon]," Revue des Troupes Coloniales, 68, 1908.

homogeneity, showed at the time of the "regrouping movement" the predominance of the three great tribes, Yémödâg, Yémvâg, and Yémisôm.

511 The Ogooué-Ivindo seems to be one of the poorest regions of
702 Gabon. Not having any economic equipment, it was only precariously active during the war effort. On the other hand, frequent recruiting has seriously affected this country (which along with

563 who, being related to the coastal minorities, constitute the "aristocratic race" of the country, and, having become relatively hierarchical, has known how to "preserve its position." (2)

2. Rapport Ogooué-Maritime [Maritime Ogooué Report], 3e trimestre [Third Quarter], 1935.

162 Though the Fang "have settled in a haphazard manner and a little everywhere," they have nevertheless formed two important centers of population, on the Ogooué above Lambaréné and in the area around the southern lakes. (3) They represent more than 35 percent

3 Rapport. Ogooué-Maritime [Maritime Ogooué Report], 4e trimestre [Fourth Quarter], 1935.

of the population (17,500 inhabitants) in this district of multiple ethnic groups, which in 1936 had one fifth of its inhabitants settled at the lumber works. The Fang villages here consist of 35 clans or 621 615 619 fragments, about half of the population forming a homogeneous clan, while the other [85] half is composite. Apart from the Yémvög, most of the existing tribes are not found (or are unimportant) in the Woleu-N'Tem [region]. The most numerous elements seem to originate from the Ivindo. Although they reached the region forming the present-day district of Port-Gentil at the end of their push, the Fang have not succeeded in evicting the dominant ethnic groups, the Ouroungou and the Nkomi.

Region of the Estuary

162 We have already stated that the date of the arrival of the Fang at the Estuary can be set at 1850. At that time they replaced the residual coastal groupings, particularly the Bakélé who, after abandoning the Ogooué, had to leave the Como. Since 1900 the population of this region has been "nearly entirely composed of

162 Pahouin." (1) They occupy the districts of Kango and Cocobeach

1. Archives de Libreville [Archives of Libreville], 1900-1910.

(6,000 and 7,500 inhabitants); they represent more than 95 percent of the district of Libreville, if one discounts the foreign "workers" hired under contract. They have imposed themselves on Libreville (to the detriment of the aboriginal Mpongwé), where they form nearly 40 percent of the population and are dominant in 15 out of 23 sections of the town. This hold over the chief town of the territory is proof of their conquering activity.

361 In the district of Cocobeach, more than 20 clans or tribal
615 fragments are present, especially Oyèk (a tribe found also at Médouneu and particularly in Spanish Guinea) and Effak This region, which in the past was important as a commercial center, is without any trade, and the administrative reports stress the
[141] depopulation movement which is taking place. (2)

2 Cf. especially Rapport politique [Political Report] 1937, Department of the Estuary, giving a special analysis of the causes of the very high infant mortality.

162 Kango District at the tip of the Estuary is one of those where the
361 demographic decline is the most marked. If the census of 1936 is
615 accepted, there are 25 clans and fragments The most numerous
● 619 group, that of the Yéngũ, accounts only for about 10 percent Libreville District, having incorporated the former subdivision of Chinchoua, exhibits a Fang population divided to the maximum This last region is characterized by a [86] veritable crumbling of the group. The 1943 census shows 54 clans and tribal fragments (with 3,500 inhabitants), of which only 8 contain more than 150 persons. This is also the region which has been most emptied for the benefit of the capital, where the natives of the former subdivision of Chichoua represent nearly 7 percent of the population.

162 In the part of the district that corresponds to the former subdivision
361 of Libreville, the Fang group is much more homogeneous. The
615 Oyèk are dominant with 45 percent of the villagers, then come the
● 619 Ntum numbering 20 percent, and the Effak (Yénzòk tribe) with about 12 percent. Nine other groupings represent from 4 5 percent (Esisis) to 1. 5 percent (Omvâg) of the population of this former division. Like Chinchoua it has suffered under the attraction of Libreville.

361 If the Estuary region has been affected demographically during
615 the last fifty years, it does not seem to have changed from the point of view of clan composition. The archives of the former Como Circle [administrative unit] (1) show that the groupings now

1. For which very precise reports were drawn up in 1905 and 1909.

considered the most important constituted villages known during the years 1900-10. However, two essential differences appear: these groupings at that time existed almost isolated and not at the level of dozens of little groups. They were localized rather definitely along the banks of the rivers, whereas they are now scattered. The villages they formed were larger than those of the present day. We have thus an indication of the process of atomization which took place during the first half of this century.

One is at first astonished at the complexity of the Fang country Outside the Upper Woleu-N'Tem, clan groupings do not appear within the limits of even small regions; they form villages which are often far apart from one another; they are scattered and intermixed. As a matter of fact, only the village grouping and the land it uses can be located on the terrain. Moreover, it is necessary to specify that the latter was stabilized, and a limit set on its mobility only at a very recent date. The fragmentation is at its maximum at the extreme end of the Fang migration, in the coastal districts and in the "zone of contact" [87] created in the surroundings of the Middle and Lower Ogooué. An average volume by clan could be calculated for each region which would give figures between

596 conclusion that a substantial social framework did not exist. A report written at the beginning of the century notes the impossibility "of finding an embryo of organization," emphasizing that there exist only more or less extended "families."

596 867 In the past the educational system very early gave the young Fang an exact knowledge of his genealogy (abara). Father Trilles writes that "the young man is particularly taught the individual list of his ancestors, which only concerns the male generations, (for) the woman is ignored," and, moreover, she never receives such instruction. (2) By knowing the relationships within his

2. Father Trilles, Le totémisme chez les Fan [Totemism Among the Fang], notes on pp. 109, 111, 180.

paternal line, the individual knows to which fundamental groupings he belongs, which women are forbidden him, and what relations he should have with such-and-such individuals, both living and dead. By more and more distant links he attaches himself to groupings that are more and more widely extended and are of more and more ancient formation. The first of these [groups] in which he finds himself immediately entered is the nd'ɛ bɔt, a patrilocal group at the village level which often has its own locality and communal house, which gather together, under the authority of the "eldest," or ntɔl-mɔt, the latter's posterity, his younger brothers and their posterity, and sometimes that of his paternal uncles; in addition, the [posterity] of individuals who are tied to him by bonds of kinship, adoption, or friendship. The most extended of
● 619 these [groups] is the "tribe" (ayɔ̌g, formerly ayɔm, studied by Martrou and Trilles, whose origin is neither located nor dated, but simply legendary, and whose dispersed took place throughout nearly the whole of the Fang country. [102] The intermediate groupings spread out concentrically from one to the other; the relations existing between the individuals they contain are expressed by a "fraternity" that is less and less real and less and less binding.

We have kept the term "tribe," used by the first observers of the Fang, to designate this earliest formed grouping, which is

619 now the most comprehensive, the most dispersed, the least active, and which traces its origin to a legendary ancestor — or mvam — now Christianized by some (thus, Adam-Nzamõ among the Ndõg) Its unity is indicated by a name, a motto, and special tattooing and symbols. (1) Before the last great migrations the tribe had a rela-

1. These symbols are clearly described by Trilles, Largeau, and, particularly, by Tessmann (op. cit.).

tively definite location and was divided only into a limited number of clans (for example, 6 in the case of the Yévõ). The migrations going toward and through the South Cameroons and Gabon have created a long series of upheavals, as is evidenced by the various tribal legends which ascribe the great fragmentations and dispersals to the crossing of the Upper Sanaga (Lom) and of the "Adzap hole" (symbolizing access to the great forest). Thus the Yévõ (2) trace back to this "crossing" the separation into 10 group-

2. Légendes des Yévõ [Legends of the Yévõ], Archives of Ebolowa.

ings going toward the region of N'Tem (6 groups), toward Gabon (3 groups), and toward the coast after following along the Nyong (one group). These last have also undergone a process of a chain of upheavals and dispersals themselves, which we shall analyze by means of recent examples. Father Trilles was able to show how, following this movement, the tribal name was preserved only for the "clan of the founder of the tribe and (for) that which was founded by one of his sons or descendants in direct line." (3) In

3. Father Trilles, op. cit., p. 130.

this last case a prefix signifies that it applies to a secondary group; thus the tribal name Yémvi survives only under the forms of Yémvi and Esamvi. However, such clans manifest a pre-eminence which is at the base of the social organization: that of the "eldest" and of the line of descent from the eldest [ones]. The legitimacy of

619 this pre-eminence was also guaranteed by the possession of the skulls of ancestors (évora biéri), which were transmitted "from eldest son to eldest son." (4) Nowadays, because of the extreme

4. Idem., p. 113.

dispersal of the tribal fragments and the near-disappearance of the Biéri cult, because [103] of the small number of such groupings and the relaxing of relations between groupings, these clans do not have the benefit of a privileged situation and did not always play a major role at the time of the clan movement — some have even assimilated at that time by more vigorous tribes. (1) They were

1. "Such a group that believed itself a tribe (ayong) would find itself demoted to the level of a simple clan," writes the author of a Rapport sur le regroupement des Fan [Report on the Regrouping of the Fang], March, 1948.

not able to maintain the feeling of tribal reality or the solemn gatherings (ésama, ésulan) which confirmed this feeling periodically, while the Cameroons groupings, who were less divided and less scattered, have preserved them. This explains their exemplary role during recent years.

619 The term "clan" therefore remains reserved for the groupings whose lines of descent go back to a real ancestor (ésa, the ésa being opposed to the mvam as "real kinship" is to "spiritual kinship"). These groupings express themselves locally far more than the tribe (by clan patches or echeloned villages), and have imposed a strict and unquestionable exogamy. They participate in the system of alliances set up by the interplay of marriage and have a special name — while the inferior groupings are not named. The colonial administration knows the Fang groupings by their clan names and these have been used in taking the census. These names have a characteristic morphology because of their prefixes ésa or éba. The clans have also been subjected to rupture. Groupings

(1) Names of stations.
(2) Geographical co-ordinates of the stations.
(3) T: mean monthly temperature in degrees (general mean for the last 10 years). R: mean monthly rainfall in millimeters (general mean for the last 10 years).
(4) Total annual rainfall in millimeters, 1946-1955.
(5) Temperature extremes: maxima and minima during the year (mean for the last 10 years, months and degrees) (Oyem and N'Djolé, have only pluviometric posts).

/4/

Chapter 2

Ethnological and Historical Position

1. Nomenclature

The term "Pahouin" is undoubedly incorrect, but it is convenient. There exists in fact no African designation applicable to the whole of the group of peoples studied here. Some writers (Martrou, Trilles...) prefer to speak of the Fang or Fan group, which has the drawback of creating a confusion with the tribes properly called Fang, which constitute but a fraction of this group. That is why, along with Largeau, Tessmann, Madame Dugast, and others, I prefer to speak of the Pahouin.

It should be observed that this term, long taken amiss by the Africans, in recent years tends to be adopted by them in connection with the political regrouping of tribes, for the very reason that it does not give prominence to any one of them. Thus the Mitzic Conference in 1947, bringing together the Fang, Boulou /Bulu/, Ntoumou /Ntum/, Mvaé, and Fong, took the name Pahouin Conference, Ntoumou, Boulou, Mvaé, and Fong declining to be lumped together under the designation "Fang."

Even the origin of the word "Pahouin" is debatable. The most plausible hypothesis is that of Father Trilles, who derives it from m-faⁿ (radical faⁿ plus the singular classifier m/be) by way of Pongoué /Mpongwe/, which changes the F to P and is averse to ending

however, since traces of it can be recognized in the contemporary movement for Pahouin Regrouping represented in the Cameroons by the U. T. N. K. party (N'Tem Kribi Tribal Union). Such /theoretical/ constructs are still rather risky in our present state of knowledge, and it is better to limit ourselves to a pure and simple description, resorting as little as possible to interpretation, which in any case should be done with hesitancy.

I shall therefore limit muself here to the attempt to perceive Pahouin society on three essential structural levels, while emphasizing again the necessarily arbitrary and incomplete nature of such a proceeding.

These three levels are the most easily perceptible to the European observer and at the same time the most significant, apparently, in the eyes of the Pahouin themselves. These are, what I shall call, for lack of anything better and because they are the terms particularly retained by the administration, the tribe, the clan, and the extended family or village family. Something will also have to be said about intermediate structures such as lineages, segments /fractions/, and village groups, and a little more on the subject of the household or limited family, whose importance is increasing. /44/

a. The Tribe

I designate as "tribe" what Trilles calls "group," while he keeps the term "tribe"—as do many observers in Gabon—for what I call "clan." This is because in southern Gabon there is only one "tribe" in the sense I understand, that of the true Fang, or Fang-Fang as Spanish writers call them.

I know of no Pahouin word specifically denoting tribe, Trilles uses the expression mfulane meyoñ, that is, "all of the clans together." In fact, and this is no doubt significant, the term most commonly used is ayoñ, which also denotes what I call clan. Mfulane meyoñ is used particularly when there is occasion to specify that one is referring to a higher structural level, sometimes also referred to as ngum ayoñ, "the clan as a whole," or meyoñ mese, "all the clans." (1) Nevertheless, the tribe is indeed a reality, in spite of this

1. American translators of the Bible have used ayoñ for "people" as well as for "tribe" and "realm."

619 uncertainty about the term for it. It is known by a proper name—Fang, Boulou, Ntoumou, Ewôndo, etc. —and its members have an actual feeling of belonging.

Tribes usually inhabit a homogeneous geographical area; but this is not an absolute rule: the Mvaé are divided into two blocks by the Ntoumou, similarly there are isolated Fang nuclei in northern Boulou country.

Earlier (pp. 18-19) we recalled the legend that places the formation of the tribes at the time when the children of the ancestor Afiri Kara separated after crossing the Sanaga. Each tribe would therefore be composed of the descendants of one of these mythical ancestors, /each/ having followed a distinct migration route and later settled down in a specific area of shifting cultivation. This explanation would give us a satisfactory solution, but it contradicts another tradition, apparently better attested, according to which the same clans are to be found within all the tribes. The latter tradition corresponds better with the aspirations toward unity of the "Pahouin nation." The tribes would then be definite groupings composed of the same clans, and at the core of each tribe would be found descendants of several mythical ancestors and not of just a single one, as the first theory has it.

In any case there is no question but that the tribe has a very definite existence and makes itself known, particularly as against adjacent tribes, even though admittedly the latter would be composed of the same clans. Tales of old wars and the spectacle of present-day rivalries are evidence of this.

We should add that some tribes have a traditional origin that is non-Pahouin, although they definitely belong to the group. This is the case with the Mbida-Mbane and the Mvog-Nyenge, who probably are descended from slaves of the Pahouin; with the Fong, who probably derive from the marriage of a Bané to /45/ a Pygmy woman; and perhaps there are others. We shall see that it is difficult in certain cases to know whether to class certain groups among "tribes" or among "clans."

The tribe formerly had no over-all political organization: there is no word exactly denoting "chief." Individuals designated to lead the tribe in war, to represent it in trade or political negotiations, had only a temporary authority, personal, and always open to question. The ties of clan relationship were much stronger and more evident

than tribal ties. Nevertheless, politico-religious associations like the ngil did exist—very little is known about them today—which transcended clan barriers and contributed to a certain amount of tribal cohesion. On the other hand, certain individuals could have influence, sometimes authority, but never permanent command, extending beyond the limits of their clan. Usually the people involved were officers in initiation societies: the usig nto, the Bané high judge, was probably a high-ranking initiate in the ngil. The njôô bôt (commander of men, war leader), the évet ("capita," caravan leader), the nkukuma (1) (rico hombre, rich man)—these men on the other

1. Emphatic form of nkukum (rich).

hand had only occasional authority and that within a limited circle.

b. The Clan

I call "clan" that which the majority of the Pahouin call ayoñ (mvôg, mvôk, in certain northern tribes) (2). It is perhaps the basic

2. Cournarie, 1933, in Coutumes de Nyong et Sanaga /Customs of the Nyong and Sanaga/ points out that ayong were divided into meyom (ayom). The ayom is formed by the coming together of several mvogo who, being descended from the same ancestor, consider themselves the issue of the same mother (obligation of exogamy). Occasionally deference is paid to the mvogo most closely related to the ancestor, and its head is called ntomba or nya moto nnam or mot nnam.

The collective group may gather together: Emoi of nda bot, Ekoan of mvogo. All grown men may speak. Elders and distinguished persons then withdraw for deliberation (esok); they return to announce the decision. (J.B.)

structural unit of Pahouin society, at any rate the one the Fang of

G14 Trilles listed about 80 meyoñ among the Fang of Gabon, and com-
G19 parable figures may be set for the Boulou or the Ewôndo, which would tend to cross-check the theory according to which clan ties extend across tribal boundaries to include the whole Pahouin group. The phenomenon does not seem open to question as regards those clans that are to be found under the same name throughout all, or in many, tribes; it is perhaps more questionable for certain Gabon segments that have been more or less arbitrarily absorbed into Cameroons clans at the time of "Pahouin regrouping." Even in the latter case, however, there exists for the pseudo tradition a precedent genuinely rooted in custom, that of tribes like the Yebekolo or the Yembama, whose names suggest that we are dealing with former clans, which became detached from a tribe (the Boulou, in actual fact) and took to practicing endogamy. An analgous process of "clanification" may be imagined of Fang segments too long isolated from their ayoñ.

Be that as it may, this intertribal community of meyoñ is more apparent between the Boulou and Fang tribes, that is, in the south, than between them and the Beti tribes of the north, certain of which, moreover, call the clan mvôg, not ayoñ, a phenomenon perfectly explicable if we admit that the Eton and Mangisa, for instance, are Pahouinized rather than true Pahouin.

G14 Each ayoñ has a proper name, which, according to Trilles, would be that of the clan totem preceded by the prefix ésa or ye (segments and lineages are called by the name of the ancestor). Some meyoñ, however, have a name that does not include these particles, but they are generally those groups that possess a particular kind of structure
G14 to which we shall refer later on (1). The particle ésa derives from the
M2

1. The ébi clans in Gabon are related in the opinion of some writers to the ésa clans; but there is a noun ébi, ébé, meaning hole, ditch.

verb sak /47/, a transitive verb meaning "to perform coition" (sa' minga = to copulate with a woman), by extension meaning "to impregnate;" the regular derivative, ésa/bisa, means "lineage," while the irregular form, ésa/besa, means "father." The particle ye might come from yee, "valley," "hollow," "fissure," perhaps connected with a root Y./YI connoting ideas of moisture, feminity, or maternity

556 relations between the sexes, this emphasis to a great extent explains
156 why no true peasantry has developed, but rather a class of nonpeasant planters, comparable in the last analysis to some of the European settlers. The Pahouin remain very much strangers and travelers on the land, whence the importance of personal property (in the legal sense) in their eyes. Nevertheless, a further development is in the making in this connection—described above (p. 96) which is leading to a strengthening of land ownership, /so that/ certain collective reactions in the way of procedure concerning land and domain suggest that we are witnessing, at least in the Cameroons, a genuine putting down of roots.

● 619 Tribal pride is still considerable, to the point of hostility between different branches of the group, but ethnic cohesion is found vis-à-vis outsiders and gives real unity to the Pahouin as a solid group.

2. The Individual Life Cycle

a. Conception, Gestation, Birth

843 A woman is considered pregnant, a nyoñeya abum, she has got a belly, when she has passed through four menstrual cycles, a nji yene ngon, without seeing the moon. Conception is supposed to be the
[842] result of the mixture of sperm, meyôm (with the same root as nnôm, pl. beyôm = male) and of menstrual blood, metyi me ngon, girl's blood or lunar blood; the length of pregnancy is calculated from the date when the last menstruation should have begun. Nowadays a pregnancy of nine months is considered normal, but some of my informants mentioned normal terms of eight or ten ngon (lit., moon or girl), a word that can as well refer to a calendar month as to a lunar month or a menstrual cycle. It is difficult for a man to obtain more precise information on this point since the subject is restricted to women. Besides, longer pregnancies are considered possible,
[154] though sometimes suspect; amenorrhea due to a fibroid growth is a proof of sorcery, the tumor being considered an évu. The fetus (for which the term is secret, forbidden, étyi, in any case for men, and probably for women uninitiated into mevungu) is thought at the beginning of gestation to take the form of a lizard, like the first man at the moment of the creation /of the universe/.

6: Alexandre and Binet
101, 131, 563, 619

Fang FH9

[Chart for sections of end map.]

A	B
C	D

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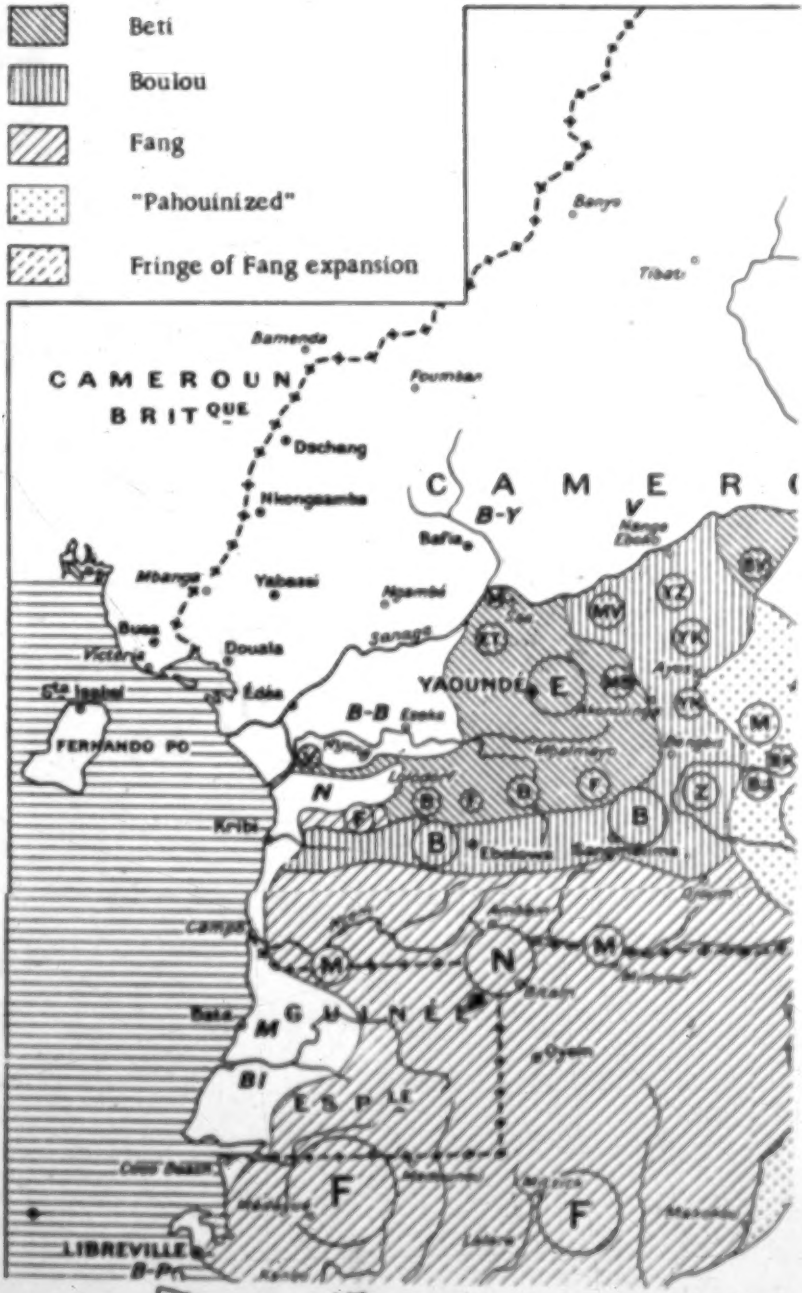
The Pahouin Group



[End Map (A)]

6: Alexandre and Binet-- 8.1 G-5 (1946-1954) 1958 FH9 Fang FH9

The Pahouin Group

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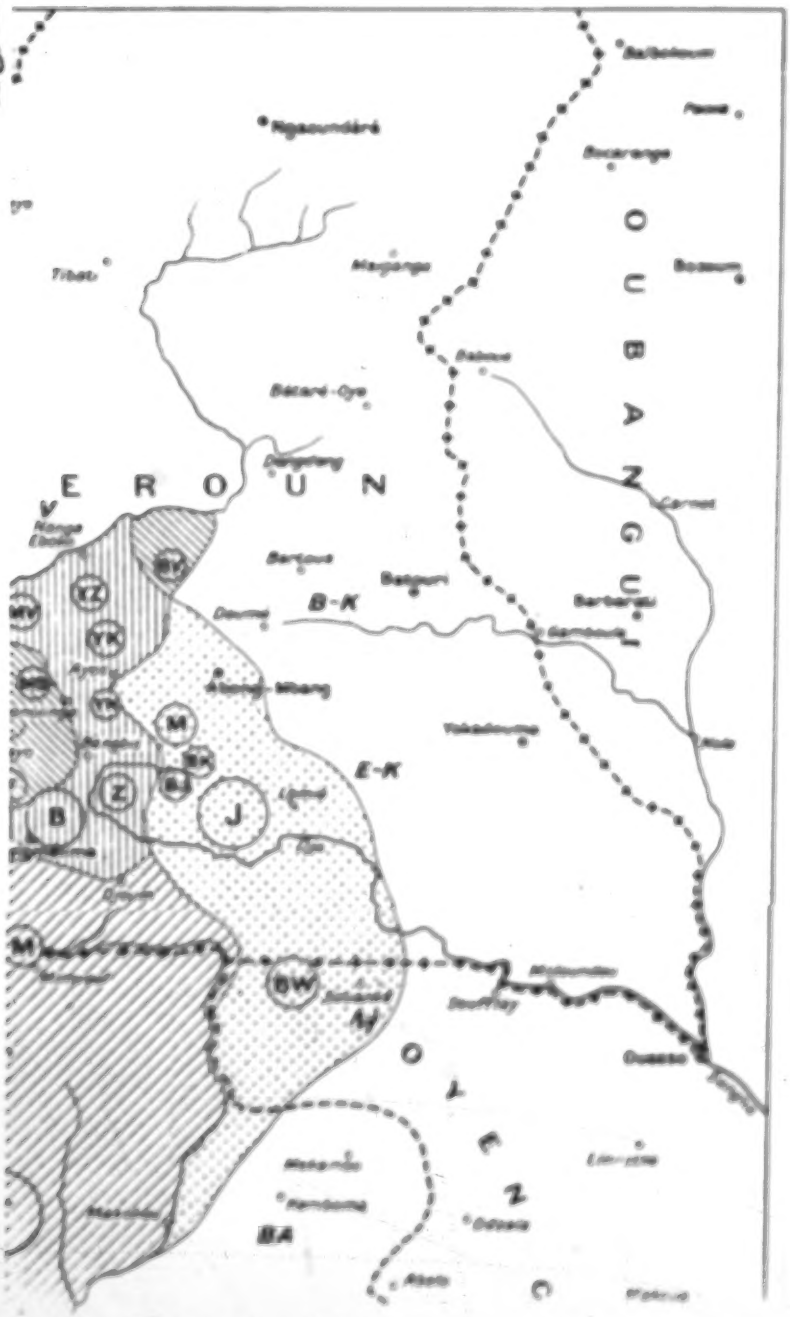

[Ewd Map (B)]

6; Alexandre and Binet--184 G-5 (1946-1954) 1958 FH9 Fang FH9

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Neighboring Peoples

B-B : Basso-Bakoko ; B-Y : Bafia-Yambasa ; V : Baboute (Yutéré) ; B-K
M-O ; Mitshogo-Okandé ; BU : Bapounou ; NK : Nkomi ; B-P : Bango-Pongwé

[Eud Map(C)]

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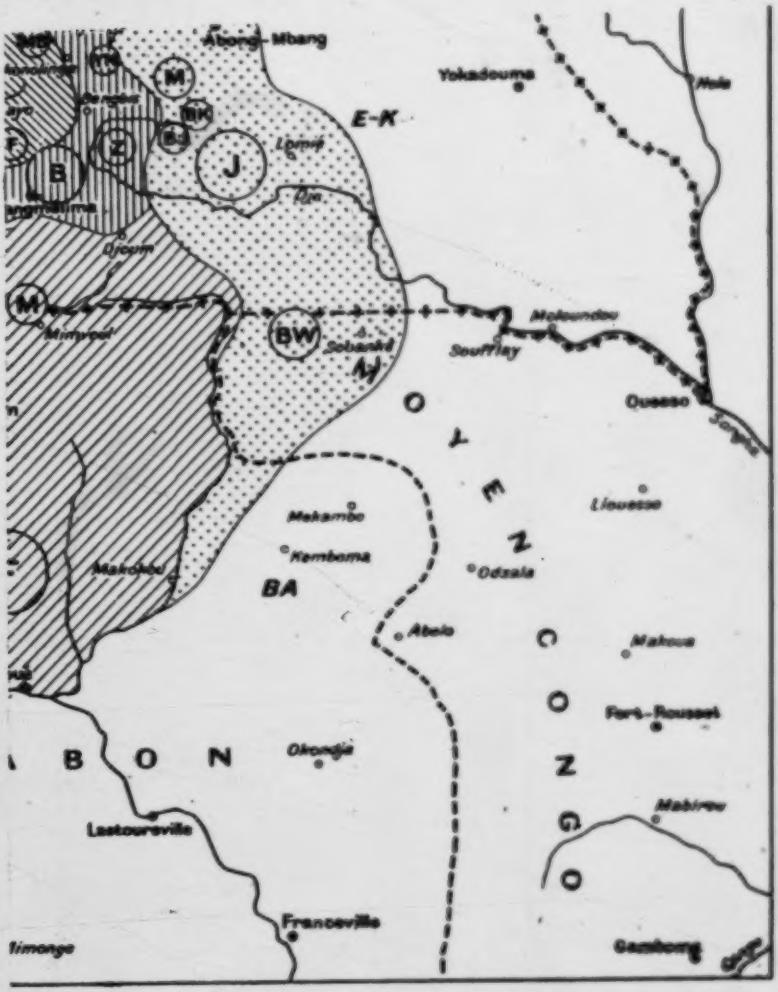


MBIDA-MBANE BANE BAMVELE BOULOU ZAMAN YEBEKOLO

NTOUMOU MEKAE BADJOUE BAKWELE BIKELE DZIMOU-JEM

…uté (Vutéré), B-K : Baya-Kaka, E-K : Essel-Konabembé, BA : Bakota
…-P : Benga-Pongwé, Bl : Balengi ; M : Mabéa ; BT : Batenga ; N : Ngoumba

[End Map (D)]

territory, though each keeps its own autonomy without intermingling.

Each of the four Fan groups are divided into tribes, each with its own chief, territory, and autonomy; none is subordinate to another, all the more so because slaves are not taken in war, for unredeemed captives are promptly eaten.

The tribes vary in importance according to the level of development, the kind of chiefs they have had, and the size of their territory. Thus, the Yenkwax possess no more than three sparsely populated villages, and at the most they can muster 300 warriors; the Yengon, [14] though a long-established tribe, have only one village and a few warriors; while the Yemvi, on the contrary, inhabit several hundred villages and number thousands of warriors. But about this term "tribe," let me here mention a very important point: at present, and since a migration which, according to my own research, should be dated 32 or 33 generations back, no more tribes are being formed, only clans. Existing tribes (and we shall see in a moment how they may be distinguished from clans) may be said to have been established about ten centuries ago in our reckoning, which clearly does not mean that they did not exist before that time. Their origin must certainly go back much earlier.

A tribe rarely remains homogeneous for long. Many factors contribute to its splitting up, such as a series of migrations, family disputes, and the activities of heads of families who are ambitious or eager to throw off excessive authority. The steady growth of a tribe at the same time leads to the overpopulation of villages and the necessity of looking elsewhere for new hunting and agricultural lands; hence, after an indefinite period, a tribe splits into clans composed of an unspecified and highly variable number of families. Some clans are very large, such as the Esingi, and make up hundreds of villages, while others, either because they are very recent or because of the same disintegrating forces as exist for the tribes, number only a few families.

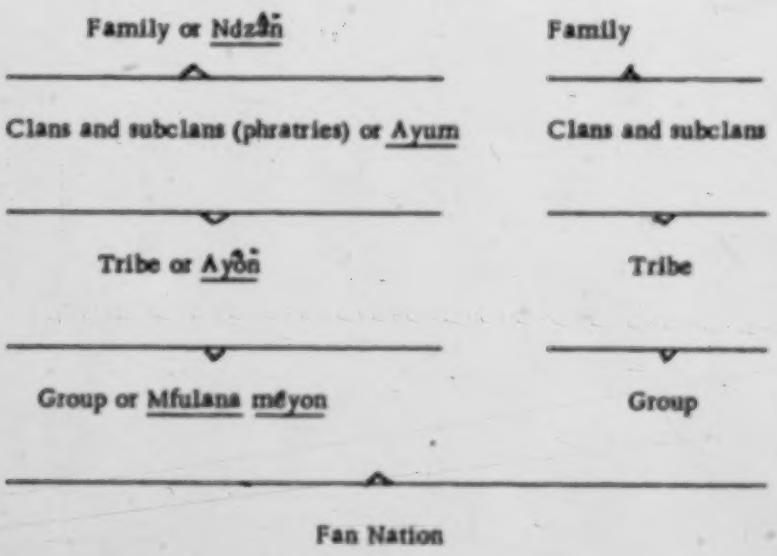
Clans in turn, as a result of the same circumstances that made tribes split into clans, split into subclans, also of varying importance.

From what I have just said, a fact may be immediately deduced which runs counter to the usual generalizations accepted by Europeans and superficial observers. In the view of the latter the

619 distribution of the nation and its division into tribes and clans is
614 based upon an arbitrary and highly variable standard: the number of individuals.

In my view on the contrary -- and this is certainly that of the Fan -- the different concepts of nation, tribe, clan, and subclan have a unique, immutable basis, the family, [15] which constitutes the kernel or, of one prefers, the primary cell or even the pivot on which the whole organization turns.

Thus we have the following structural table:



This structure has an important consequence, one whose development will not, however, be dealt with here but must be postponed until after discussion of the idea of the totem. The consequence is this: among clans some bear the totem name, others do not. Although some, in fact nearly all, writers consider that bearing the totem name is a condition sine qua non of totemism in clans, we shall see that this idea is exaggerated and that clans, with or without a totem name, are all totemic.

2. Allied Tribes

101 619 Not only do these four large divisions -- Bêtsi, Mêkê, Bulê, and Fôn -- make up the Fan nation proper, but a certain number of other tribes revolve within their circle and are connected to the same branch. I say "a certain number" because the interior of the German Cameroons and the hinterland lying between the Woleu, N'tem, and upper Sanga rivers has been little explored. Before our arrival the existence of the Dzèm [Njem] was barely known; the Dzandzama had never been mentioned. These tribes form the intermediary link connecting the Fan to the Batêkê branch and through this to the Kanioka and other central Congo tribes, [16] whose folklore has analogies with that of the Fan as I recently pointed out. (1)

1. See Anthropos, Vol. 4, pp. 945-971; Vol. 5, pp. 163-180.

A Yaundê grammar was published not long ago in Anthropos; (2) these people are without doubt an offshoot of the

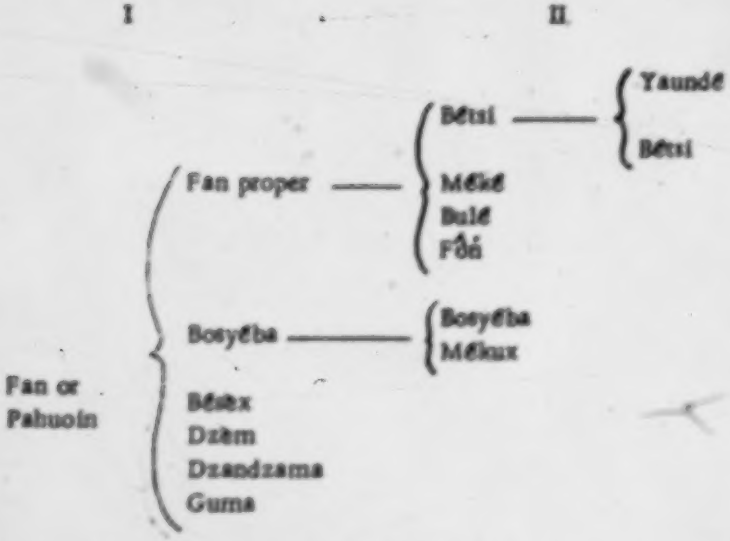
2. See Anthropos, Vol. 4, pp. 684-701, 919-930.

Bêtsi branch. The Bosyêbs dialect is somewhat different and is nearer that of the Bubi of Fernando Po; the group also belongs to the Fan nation. Finally, deviating from the primitive stock in progressive order, there are the Dzèm, Dzimu [Ndsime], and Dzandzama, nowadays scarcely leaving the jungle and the country of the Nyamnyam [Niam-Niam, Azande]. In spite of what has 197 been said of them in the past, their language is only distantly related to that of the last tribe. (3)

3. Since certain observers and explorers -- such, for instance, as Allegret, a former Protestant missionary in Gabon, who connects them with the Nyamnyam, Fulah,

101 619

To sum up, the Fan may be divided as follows:



197 The Fan, Bosyéba, Bésèx, Dzèm, Dzandzama, and Guma tribes may be assumed to speak separate languages not dialects of one. These languages are, however, closely related; they have very nearly the same principles and are cognates.

Bétsi, Mékè, etc., merely represent dialects.

[One paragraph deleted, repititive. --Translator]

101 619 161 The Dzèm, whose hitherto unpublished language I hope to make known soon, are grouped in the upper N'tem region; their population should not be more than 100,000.

The Dzandzama border them on the southeast and provide a linguistic link to the Batéké, southern neighbors; their population is about that of the Dzèm.

The Bésèx, or Bulu, who occupy a large part of the region to the north of the Ogooue, are a widely dispersed tribe, formerly very powerful, now almost extinct through poison, practitioners [feticheurs], and pressure from the Pahuoin. Their population is not likely to be greater than a few thousand. [18]

101 The Bosyéba ... are no more numerous than the Bésex.
●64 They have been classed perhaps wrongly as a separate people
161 and in my opinion are basically only tribes long detached from
the Méké branch, whose distinctive tattooing and little altered
language they have preserved. In 1889 when Fourneau reached
[114] the Bosyéba country to the north of the Campo, he saw his
porters, recruited in Méké country on the banks of the Ogooué,
immediately fraternizing with the Bosyéba and delighted to
discover their own tongue after crossing through Bétsi terri-
tory. (1)

1. Cf. A. Fourneau, "De l'Ogôoué au Campo" [From the Ogooué to the Campo], Bull. Ste. Geogr. Vol. 12 (1891), pp. 190-215.

[One paragraph deleted about an etymology which author considers "incorrect."--Translator]

The Guma, nowadays very few in number, have been driven back towards the Cameroons; they also are related to the Méké branch. Europeans often refer to the people of this whole group by the term "Makina" from ma ki na, "I say that..."; they have, in fact, a habit of starting all their remarks with these words. The Bétsi are called "Mazuna" for the same reason.

3. Size of the Fan Population

161 The Fan [illegible] by far the most important branch. It is extremely difficult to estimate their number. Officially they are only a few hundred thousand. But the official figure is far from accurate, for government statistics only count the man who pays taxes. Furthermore, more than half of the French Congo is unexplored except by a few, infrequent

695 The following are some of the principal kinds:

A man is accused of murder. He will first have to be
694 seized; if that is impossible, it does not much matter. Since
672 members of the tribe stick together, another man will be
619 seized, no matter whom. If this cannot be done, the Fan may
682 even take a man belonging to another tribe, who will be kept prisoner until his family and tribe, taking up the cudgels in their turn, capture either the culprit or a member of the culprit's tribe. One can see to what degree such solidarity may lead to retaliation.

Once a man has been caught, guilty or not, he undergoes
695 one of the following tests:
682 The dzismébiñn is the eye ordeal. A person is brought before the chief, gagged and with his head pulled back. The practitioner takes a little pot made from the hard shell of a
[278] small gourd called ngon, which is filled with a certain liquid consisting of vegetable poisons with an atropine base. The presumed culprit has the right -- and often takes advantage of it -- to require his own totem to be dipped in the liquid. The contents of the pot are then poured into his eye. If the eye stays in its socket, the man is innocent; if the eye is destroyed or raised out of the socket, he is guilty. (1) In the latter case

[[71]]

1. The same test occurs among the Bangala and Barundi.

he is immediately killed by a knife stroke. He may nevertheless ask to drink the test poison, provided that he is buying back his life for the first time. This is often permitted.

A second and more generally used ordeal is the following, called médzim mé ne aydn, burning water. [561]

The practitioner boils water in a pot. When it comes to a boil, he throws in a wire ring, and the presumed culprit must retrieve it without burning himself; if his hand is injured, he is declared guilty, but if not, he is adjudged innocent and is dismissed. In such a case, the plaintiff himself is punished and must drink the test poison. The accused man has the right to

8: Bennett D-5 (ca. 1898) 1899 FH9 Fang FH9

832 584 583 gives him (the father) the *beki* (dowry). The father of the young virgin takes the goods to his town; the young man remains in possession of the woman.

They marry with *biang-ndoma*, eloping medicine thus.

This is *Biang-ndoma*.

Biang-akong (war medicine).—Told me by Fam-deu, a Fang, Esisis clan, at 721 789 Foulabifong, Nkomo river, April 19th, 1898. This *biang* was illustrated to me; a leopard tooth is the *Biang-akong*.

Make a bowl of war medicine, of leaves, roots, and bark. Call all people of the town. Drop the leopard tooth into the medicine. If the point of the tooth *looks* toward the people we have a palaver (trouble) with, then we must go and fight and we will win. If the root of the tooth points toward the people we have a palaver with, then we must *tabe si* (sit down) or our enemies will win if we go to fight them.

This is the *Biang-akong*.

789 *Biang-akumayong*.—This *biang* is the protector of the tribe or nation (*ayong*, tribe).

● 619 622 Told me by Edya-ôvum, the headman of Foulabifong on the Nkomo river, who sold me the complete set of the *Biang-akumayong* belonging to the dead headman "Commisan." I present this *biang* for your inspection this evening. The tin canister was obtained from a white man and is used in place of the usual basket to carry bones in. It contains portions of the skull of an albino (male), portions of the skull of a *mon nguri*, young chimpanzee, red powder and a variety of native medicine.

[724] [534] This *biang-akumayong* is always carried by the headman of a town during war.

A bell hangs from the bottom of the canister containing the bones; it rings when the headman walks.

Nlo.—The small horn belonging to the *biang-akumayong* has *nguon* (porcupine tail) in it, also native medicine. It is used to cure people having witches. A bowl of medicine is made. The *nguon* is dipped in the medicine bowl and the sick person sprinkled with the medicine. Then the witch departs.

At this point the headman Edya stopped talking. He said, "The children who have gathered around your house must go away; no real man dare talk about the *biang-akumayong* before women and children." I told the children to go and Edya continued.

The whistle.—This is part of the *biang-akumayong*; it has been cooked (boiled) in the medicine bowl and has great power when used by the headman in calling the men together after a fight.

Mou!—This is the large horn with a piece of looking glass on top. This horn 789 619 contains much medicine, and next to the bones is the most important part of the *biang-akumayong*.

The two small antelope horns, and the small bundles of medicine, are *biang e soli* (hiding medicine); it makes the person carrying the *biang-akumayong* invisible to the enemy.

8: Bennett D-5 (ca. 1898) 1899 FH9 Fang FH9

The skin of a bush cat is part of the *biang-akumayong* called "Nsin." 789

The Mvong.—A triangular piece of iron filled with medicine, used to keep away witches, is also part of the *biang-akumayong*. 619

Biang-akong or *biang-akal* (war medicine).—This is also part of the *biang-akumayong*, and the shots from the guns of an enemy are of no avail.

One other important fetish hangs with the *biang-akumayong*.

A piece of very hard wood. Only a certain kind of woman is selected to find this wood; she is called a special or *selected* woman on account of certain peculiarities connected with her, *e.g.*, she always fails to catch fish, she may try all day but will not succeed in catching fish. The husband of such a woman, after intercourse with her, fails to catch fish the next day, he also fails to work. This is the kind of woman always selected to find this wood; it is hard wood, she is a hard woman, and she is called *Emunaya ane alert* (the woman who is hard). This medicine is also called *biang-akong*, and shot from the guns of an enemy will not harm. [177] [824]

This is the *Biang-akumayong*.

XIII.—*Witchcraft. Evus.* (*Witch.*)

If a person goes out to make witch (witch medicine, or play witch to harm others) he dies. The people take him to the backyard. Other people say, "We want to take the witch." If the corpse is a female, they open the belly. If the corpse is a male, they open the heart. They see the witch, they take it. If they bring the witch, they lay it on the smoke shelf. It dries. When finished drying they say, "We will use it as medicine." 754

This is *Evus* (witch).

Curses dead Relations.—Written at Foulabifong, Nkomo river, April 13th, 1898. Told me by Ôvôn; fully confirmed by Ogandaga and Interpreter Roby.

Ebunaang (to curse dead relations).—This is a Fang custom. A man has a palaver with another, or goods stolen. He desires to get even with the thief. He calls a friend and curses his friend's dead relations, saying, 754 578 626

"Go and kill that person for me, or go and make him pay me goods; if you do so, I will then pay you for having cursed your dead relations." It is a serious matter to have dead relations cursed, and the friend feels very bad. He must do as bid, or he is branded as a coward, and after he has completed his task he then makes claim for payment.

Nye me bê jam dâi, aye me ta mimbin (If I do it, may I see the corpses [of my people]). A Fang way of swearing an oath. [539]

Amvi ye mimbim wan, pinge me bat (My friend, by the corpses of your relations, kill those people for me).

Notes on *Ebinada* (a curse).

Ilong d'ayaga (a curse that kills).